

tation, with Dr. H. A. Riley, Mrs. C—, who had for some days been labouring under the urgent symptoms of constipated bowels. There was great pain, tension and soreness of the abdomen, with nausea and vomiting. During the three days I attended this patient, the most active treatment proved unavailing. For the last twenty-four hours, a dark fluid was thrown from the stomach without nausea. She expired yesterday. On examination, soon after death, the stomach was inflamed, and nearly the whole tract of small intestines, from the duodenum downwards, was in a state nearly approaching sphacelation, but there were no adhesions. The colon was inflamed, and greatly distended, from its head to a point just above its sigmoid flexure, where it was suddenly contracted and indurated, constituting a stricture which had evidently been of long standing. Its structure, in my judgment, was scirrhus, and similar to that in the case above related. The adipose membrane, in contact with the part, had become involved in the disease; and the lower part of the strictured portion was ulcerated, so as to allow seculent matter to escape into the general cavity. The bowel below the stricture was preternaturally contracted.

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ART. VI. *Case of Malformation of the Heart.* By RICHARD K. HOFFMAN, M. D. of New-York.

THE subject of this deviation from the natural structure of the heart, was born in June last, and presented no remarkable phenomenon, either immediately subsequent to his birth, nor during the ensuing warm months; on the approach of winter, he was observed to be very sensible to the impression of cold air; and his lips, nails, eye-lids, and superficial veins, assumed a preternaturally dark, or blue-black colour. In December I was sent for on account of his appearance; his general aspect was healthy, but diminutive for his age; and as this discoloration was of recent origin, it at first occurred to me, on examining the dress, that the tightness of the bandage encircling his body, impeded the descent of the diaphragm, and the free expansion of the lungs—and this, in a

degree, prevented that change of colour which the blood should undergo in its circulation through the lungs. The experiment of substituting a loose dress was made, which showed the error of the above reasoning, and led to the conclusion, that some defect existed at the source of the circulation. The action of the heart examined externally—the pulse—respiration—and temperature of the surface of the body, were not affected in any sensible degree; if at all, the pulse at the wrist was stronger, and the skin cooler to the touch than natural. It was evident that the child possessed, in a diminished degree, the power of generating heat, from the extraordinary quantity of clothing required to keep him comfortably warm. He seemed impatient of the usual exercise to which infants are accustomed; and when left to his own volition, showed but little disposition for any muscular exertion. During the present month, he was attacked with whooping-cough; a paroxysm of which was succeeded by fits, with great turgescence of the face and coma, as in apoplexy. Under these circumstances, the temporal artery was divided, and the blood that was freely discharged from it, was of a very dark colour, without any of the florid appearance of arterial blood; a temporary relief of the urgent symptoms followed, with a cessation of the convulsions and restoration of sensibility; his appearance for a few days encouraged a hope in his relatives of his ultimate recovery, when after a violent effort of coughing, he died in the ninth month of his age.

On examining the heart, the right ventricle was found imperfectly developed, and opening directly through the imperfect septum into the left ventricle; besides this communication between the two sides of the heart, there was another still more direct, between the sinus of the *right auricle* and the *left ventricle*, through which the finger could be introduced; the foramen ovale was also pervious, and the sinus of the left auricle small in proportion to the right; and a striking peculiarity was, that both the aorta and pulmonary artery, arose from the left ventricle; and from the relative size of the arteries, it appears that scarcely one-fourth of the



mass of the blood was sent to the lungs, to undergo the requisite change from the influence of the air in respiration, which accounts for the dark hue of the blood drawn from the temporal artery, &c.

The communication between the right auricle and the left ventricle being so direct, what structure is there to prevent the regurgitation of the blood into the sinus of the auricle, during the contraction of the ventricle? is not one of the mitral valves so disposed as to have this effect? or the left ventricle, having both arteries arising from it, was the vis a tergo from the column of the returning blood in the venæ cavæ, sufficient to prevent its reflux from the ventricle?

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ART. VII. *The History of a case of Strictured Vagina preventing delivery. In a letter to Dr. J. B. BECK.* By JAMES McNAUGHTON, M. D. Professor of Anatomy in the University of the State of New-York.

WHILE attending the meeting of the State Medical Society, in this city, in 1826, I made you, in some degree, acquainted with an interesting obstetrical case, I then had under my charge. The result was not determined when the session of the society closed, and you expressed a desire to know how the case terminated. I now avail myself of a few moments of leisure, to give you a brief sketch of its history. Cases like the one about to be related are of rare occurrence, particularly in this country; and when they are met with, are always very trying to the feelings of the practitioner, inasmuch as the life of both mother and child may depend upon the course he pursues. It frequently happens also, that one life must inevitably be lost; and there may be peculiar circumstances rendering it a nice moral question, which life ought to be preserved, if one *must* be sacrificed.

The unfortunate subject of the following history is of small stature, but of good constitution. Some nine or ten years ago, she married, and after an ordinary lapse of time, fell in labour of her first child. It proved very tedious; and from some cause or other, she came under the care of several prac-